



Lakewood Discovery Center

Salina Parks and Recreation Department

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Lakewood Discovery Center Newsletter Features

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Lakewood Trivia

Lakewood Discovery Center is the Natural Resources division of the Salina Parks & Recreation Department. LDC provides Salina with its own Urban Wildlife Sanctuary and Nature Center. Our mission and goal is to provide opportunities for members of the community and the surrounding area to explore and learn about the environment through discovery and hands on activities.

We strive to make the center a teaching tool by providing many outdoor aspects in an indoor setting. Visitors have the chance not only to interact with our many educational displays, but also get up close to some of the wildlife that lives in the park. Through these encounters, the visitors' awareness and knowledge of native wildlife will increase.

As our community grows, we also want to grow with it. We want to continue to provide a great place to observe and learn about nature. For no matter if you are younger or older, it is essential to remember that the environment is not ours, it is merely ours to take care of and pass along to the future caretakers of the land.

The Supervisor's Desk:



Welcome summer travelers, Mother Nature harkens you to the tranquil peace of the fall equinox and the splendor of the autumn. Autumn is my favorite time of the year, not that I dislike the other seasons, but autumn is full of beautiful color, bountiful harvests, and is the season of thankfulness, plus there is football, what could be better..... winning the lottery, maybe?

Autumn, also rings in the end of summer, the season of fun, the season of growth, the season of blazing, suppressing heat and humidity, especially in Kansas. Again, I don't hate the summer season, but if it were just three weeks long it would be ok in my book. Just the thought of the refreshing crisp mountain-like mornings, new frost on the pumpkins and the colorful leaves falling, the sound of ring neck pheasants in the distance amidst a golden hue of the ripened corn fields sound pretty good to me about late August.

As with the seasons, Lakewood changes its focus from the summer programs to the fall series of programs and events. Autumn is a great time to focus on nature, many wonderful things happen this time of year and our programs try to reflect this change in seasons and attitudes. We try to bring fun and education together with our fall lineup of programs, we provide traditional activities of pumpkin carving, and wildlife walks, and entertaining events like our scary campfire stories, trips to Yosemite and outdoor cooking classes, which may be scary for some of our taste testers. But, as we run our course and winter closes in, we want to provide you with one last season of fun, and growth, a season to remember.

Brian Underwood, Natural Resources Supervisor



Lakewood Wildlife Feature: Monarchs of the Air



The monarch butterflies are on the move again. As the summer winds down and September comes around, the monarch butterflies move through the Salina area on their way back to their winter roosts in Mexico. Yes, it is migration time!

Butterflies migrating? Isn't that only for the birds? No friend, there are a host of other animals besides birds that migrate, and our majestic monarch is one of them. Monarchs roost in Mexico (and some in California) during the Northern Hemisphere's winter months, when it is way too cold for little buggies to be out and about. During the warm summer months, the monarchs migrate as far north as Canada! What causes these flutterbys to know when to migrate? How do they know where to go?

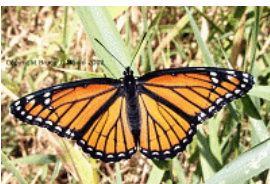
I'm glad you asked! Believe it or not, but these savvy insects actually follow a certain angle of the sun along the Earth's horizon. Let me explain. Our planet is tilted on its axis. This is what gives us our seasons. During our fall and up until the winter solstice in December, the Northern Hemisphere tilts away from the sun. This causes the sun to sit at a lower angle on our horizon, giving us shorter, colder days. As the Northern Hemisphere starts to tilt back toward the sun in our spring and up until the summer solstice, the sun sits at a higher angle on our horizon. And this causes the days to be longer and warmer. Well these buggaroos have evolved to be aware of the sun's angle in the sky. There is a certain angle of the sun that holds the ideal temperatures for them. The monarchs follow this angle up and down the Northern Hemisphere as the Earth tilts. They follow that angle from Mexico all the way up to Canada and back! And for us here in Kansas, the angle is just right in the spring and fall. That is when it is the best time to view these bold little fliers.



If you are trying to identify this incredible insect, it won't be hard. Monarch butterflies are one of the most recognizable butterflies, if not the most recognizable, with its striking black and orange coloring. And there is a reason this butterfly wants to stick out. In nature, black in combination with white, yellow, or orange means that the animal is dangerous in some way. These colors act like a billboard to other animals, advertising that one would not want to mess that animal. Let's look at some examples. The skunk uses white on black. Hornets and bees use yellow on black. And the monarch uses orange on black. But how could these gentle gliders be dangerous?

Well, my friend, they are poisonous to eat! Monarch butterflies lay their eggs on milkweed plants, which have a toxin in them, to which the monarch is immune. When the eggs hatch, the young caterpillars eat the milkweed and ingest the toxin, which stays in their systems. If you have ever seen a monarch caterpillar, you will see that it is yellow, white, and black (another advertisement of toxicity). When a caterpillar metamorphs in its chrysalis, the toxins remain within its tissues. So when the monarch emerges as an adult, it has a built-in defense system, and the warning colors to match. Birds that try to eat a monarch will be very sorry very soon (retch) and learn to avoid these colorful flies.

There is another butterfly that closely resembles the monarch butterfly in coloring and markings. This is the non-poisonous viceroy butterfly. The viceroy differs from the monarch in that it has a transverse line across the hind wing, which the monarch lacks. It was thought that the viceroy evolved to mimic the monarch, in order to have the same predator avoidance benefit. But recent research suggests that the relationship between the viceroy and the monarch may not be that simple. In the meantime, when trying to determine whether the flyer is a monarch or a viceroy, know that the viceroy is smaller and has those extra veins across the back wings. Also, viceroys do not migrate.



Viceroy



Male Monarch

Getting back to migration, the peak time for monarch butterflies in the Salina area is the latter half of September, with the midpoint around the 24th or 25th. If you are looking for a great place to observe monarch butterflies as they make their way through the area, come on out to Lakewood Discovery Center's Butterfly Garden. We hope to see you soon!

Until next time,
Anne Hoekstra, Park Naturalist





Lakewood Educational Activities

Spring: (Listed in the P & R Spring Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Spring Break Adventure Days: Bored during Spring Break? Looking for something to do. LDC offers programs on the Tuesday and Thursday of Salina Public Schools' Spring Break.

S.C.A.T.: All ages welcome. This 1½ hr program features Snacks, Crafts, Animals, and Trails. Participants will learn about native critters, take a guided nature walk, and make a snack as well as craft to take home.

T.B.A.: Check the Activity Guide each Spring for a different Thursday program.

Mother's Day Trip: All ages, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Take mom on a trip she will remember. LDC offers a variety of sight-seeing opportunities and activities as we head out of town for fun.

Summer: (Listed in the P & R Summer Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Father's Day Trips: All ages, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Take dad on a trip he will enjoy. LDC offers a variety of sight-seeing opportunities and activities as we head out of town for a day of fun.

Backyard Detectives: Ages 4-5 and 6-8. These 1½ hr hour classes focus on one topic per, week, i.e. Creepy Crawlies. Each class makes a craft and snack and takes a nature walk in addition to other learning activities.

Jr. Explorers: Ages 9-12. This is an experiential learning series done in partnership with the Smoky Hill Museum. We do hands-on activities, interact with guest speakers, and travel to see what goes on behind the scenes. Each week has two days devoted to one topic.

G.R.E.A.T. Cops & Fossils: Grades 4th – 7th. These day long classes are a part of the Saline Co. Sheriff Department's G.R.E.A.T. program. Each class learns about the fossils that can be found in Kansas, and then travels to local fossil sites to search for fossils of their own. The participants will mount the fossils they find to take home.

Archery: Ages 7 and older. These 1 hr classes teach the sport's technique, safety, rules, and etiquette at a beginner and intermediate level.

Canoeing: Ages 7 and older. These 1 hr classes teach water safety and basic canoeing skills.

Fishing Explorers: Ages 7 and older. These day long programs offer several skill levels, beginning with Basics in Bluegills and moving on to Bass Fishing and Catfish. In each class, equipment, technique, and safety are taught.

Family Canoe Nights: All ages. These 45 min programs offer families an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors together with an evening of paddling on Lakewood Lake.

Fall: (Listed in the P & R Fall Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Fall Family Nature Series:

Family Canoe Nights: All ages. These 45 min programs offer families an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors together with an evening of paddling on Lakewood Lake.

Campfire Stories: All ages welcome, although some of the stories are scary. ☺ Spend an October evening by the campfire, enjoying smores and hearing stories told by the LDC staff.

Pumpkin Fest: All ages. Celebrate the Halloween season with an evening of pumpkin carving. Pumpkins, carving tools, and treats are supplied.

Campfire Cooking: All ages. Learn the art of campfire cuisine. Techniques and "secrets" shared on how to make a fireside feast. Then try the different foods cooked that evening by the LDC staff. Past foods have included campfire lasagna, pot pie, and cinnamon donuts.

T.B.A.: Check the Activity Guide each Fall for other quarterly programming.

Winter: (Listed in the P & R Winter Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Milford Lake Eagle Day: All ages, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. This day long program takes participants to Milford Lake where bald eagles nest. The trip includes touring the Milford Nature Center, an eagle program by the MNC staff, and time for eagle watching.

T.B.A.: Check the Activity Guide each Winter for other quarterly programming.

Year-Round :

In addition to the above set of programs, Lakewood offers Walk & Tours of the center, nature walks, girl & boy scout badge programs, and in-class programs. These programs are by appointment. Special topics can be requested for individual groups. Two weeks notice is required to book a program.





Lakewood Quarterly Programs



We at Lakewood Discovery Center strive to create programs and trips that explore the natural world while making the experience fun and educational. The physical activity encountered during these programs and trips range from minimal to strenuous activity. To better gauge whether a program is suited for your needs, we have assigned a star system to each event, ranging from 1-5 stars. 1 star = light walking and minimal activity, 2 stars = light walking and more than one activity, 3 stars = moderate walking/physical effort and extended hours of activity, 4 stars = moderate to considerable walking/physical activity, 5 stars = substantial walking/strenuous physical effort with activity. If you have any questions, please contact us at 785-826-7335.

- Unless otherwise noted, register for classes by calling the Parks and Recreation main office at 309-5765. •

Grandparents' Day

Join us at Lakewood Discovery Center for an afternoon of fun! This day we celebrate the bond between generations with activities grandparents and grandchildren can share together. Show your creative sides with a craft you can make together and take home. We will satisfy your sweet-tooth with cupcakes you may make, bake, and decorate yourselves. Then enjoy your snack as we finish up with a Creature Feature as we look at the wildlife you can find in your own backyards. (2 stars)

When: Sunday, September 10
Time: 1:30 – 3:30 pm
Limit: 16 participants
Fee: \$8.00 per person



Yosemite & Tahoe Tour

Take a well-deserved break and head out west to enjoy America's grandeur from the comfort of your plane seat. We will pass over a wide range of beautiful scenery from the western sand hills of Nebraska, to the rugged mountains of Colorado, across the Utah and Nevada basin, and finally the towering Sierras of California.

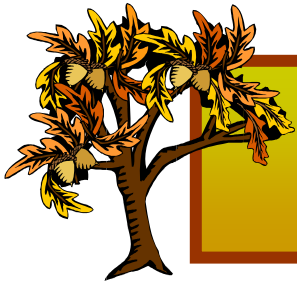
Our journey will take us to Reno, "The biggest little city in America". There we will have a day of entertainment and exploration on our own. The next morning we will set out for Yosemite National Park, the home to some of the most breath taking views and natural features in America, including: Yosemite valley, the famous peaks of Half Dome and El Capitan, redwood forests, and the Hetch Hetchy valley. We will retire for the day at the beautiful Yosemite Lodge, which is nestled in the towering trees of the valley and framed by the majestic Yosemite Falls.

We will enjoy the better part of two days in the park before driving back to Reno. The next day we will board the Lake Tahoe Ferry for a complete tour of the beautiful backdrops that surround the high Sierra lake, and enjoy a romantic dinner on the water. We will then have one more evening in Reno before returning to Salina. (3 stars)

When: Thursday, September 21 – Tuesday, September 26
Limit: 30 participants (18 yr. +)
Time: TBA
Fee: \$850 double occupancy (includes transportation, plane tickets, hotel rooms, park fees, and meals)

Full!

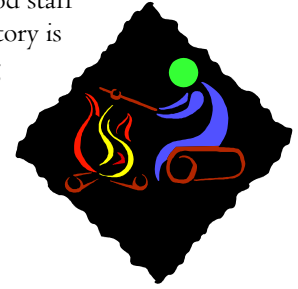




Fall Family Nature Series

Campfire Stories

Join the spirits of the woods as we enjoy a fun-filled evening of storytelling and folklore. The Lakewood staff will share ghostly stories, urban legends, and folktales that celebrate Kansas' facts and fictions. Our history is filled with silly and exciting events that are often forgotten until they are passed on through storytelling around the campfire. We will also have ooey-gooley treats and refreshments while listening to these tales of the past. (1 star)



When: Thursday, October 12

Time: 7:30 – 8:30 pm

Limit: 30 participants (all ages welcome)

Fee: \$3.00 per person

Pumpkin Fest



Join us as we celebrate Autumn and the coming of Halloween with our Pumpkin Fest activities, including Jack-O-Lantern carving, apple bobbing, caramel apples, and witches' brew. We will provide the pumpkins, designs, and carving equipment. All you need bring is your artistic ability and a spirit of fun. (1 star)

When: Tuesday, October 24 OR Thursday, October 26

Time: 6:30 – 8:00 pm

Limit: 20 participants each night (all ages welcome)

Fee: \$5.00 per pumpkin

Campfire Cooking

Tired of the same old thing on the grill? Campfire cooking can be so much more than hotdogs and hamburgers. Join us for an old-fashioned cookout with a modern twist! We'll spend the evening cooking over an open fire and demonstrate a variety of cooking methods. We will also share some of our favorite dishes and "top-secret recipes" as you dine on our culinary creations. (1 star)



When: Thursday, November 9

Time: 6:00 – 7:30 pm

Limit: 20 participants (all ages welcome)

Fee: \$5.00 per person

Family Canoe Nights

Enjoy a peaceful evening of canoeing on the waters of Lakewood. This is a great opportunity to practice an old skill or learn a new one. Life jackets and paddles will be provided. We will meet at the Lakewood Discovery Center. (1 star)



IF INTERESTED, PLEASE CALL LAKWOOD DISCOVERY CENTER (826-7335).

When: Monday, October 9th

Time: 6:00 – 7:00 pm

Limit: 3 per canoe

Fee: \$5.00 per person





LAKWOOD DISCOVERY CENTER

Wild Birthday Parties



Looking for a new and unique way to celebrate your child's birthday? Lakewood Discovery Center has just that! We offer a variety of programs that are not only educational, but also entertaining and fascinating for everyone. Come and celebrate your special day with us!

Who: Young persons age 4 and up (some age restrictions apply for certain programs)

When: Parties available Monday – Thursday with starting times between 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Reservations made by contracting Lakewood Discovery Center at 826-7335.
Please reserve at least two weeks in advance.

What: The program will be 1 ½ hrs.

Approximately 1 hr is reserved for the activity and ~ ½ hr for gifts and treats, although this schedule can be flexible.

Persons reserving the program shall provide the treats and gifts.

Fee: A fee of \$25 or \$30 will be required for the program, depending on program chosen.

A \$2 fee will be applied for each child above the number of 15, up to a maximum of 20 children

Activities

\$25 Package

Creature Feature: Meet the animal ambassadors of Lakewood! We will be getting up close and personal with some of our animal friends, such as turtles, frogs, toads, salamanders, lizards, and snakes, to learn the amazing ways they eat, hide, and protect themselves in the wild.

Nature Walk: Explore the trails at Lakewood with us! Our Urban Wildlife Sanctuary offers lots to see and discover! We will learn about the trees, plants, and animals that make Lakewood their home. Who knows what we will see?!

Lakewood Games: We all love to play games. How about games that help us learn about nature? Even better! Together we will play a variety of nature-oriented games that are fun *and* educational. (*Ages 7 and up.*)

\$30 Package

Weird Science: Whoa! Cool! This is what you will hear as we wow and amaze partygoers with volcanoes, rockets, and much more. Come learn with us as we perform science experiments with ordinary household items. (*Ages 8 and up.*)

Canoeing: Come and cruise the waters of Lakewood! We will start with basic canoeing skills, then hit the water ready for fun! (*Offered May 1 – August 31, ages 10 and up.*)

Archery: Learn the basics of archery, then try your best Robin Hood imitation here at the archery range in our forest! (*Offered May 1 – August 31, ages 10 and up.*)

Bubble Magic: Pop! Kids love bubbles! We will explore how bubbles work and then see how many different ways we can make them and play with them. (*Offered May 1 – August 31.*)



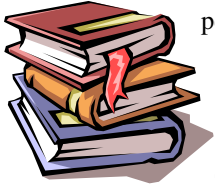
Naturalist Notes by Bill Gaskill

Fall is nearly here and Lakewood's staff is able to take a breather. Our staff is back to 2 full time naturalists and one part-time naturalist. I always have a sad feeling for the first week or so after our summer staff leaves for greener pastures (college usually). I don't know if I feel this way because of my longing for my lost college days or the loss of the entertainment that they provided for us all summer long. This feeling and the breather do not last long though with the start of a new school year and our Fall Family Nature Series.



The fall season can be as busy as our summer season. There are a variety of programs that we provide in September and October. Schools call and request tours of our facility and scout groups start to call and want help with their merit badges. Wild birthday parties seem to pick up during the fall, there is a six-day trip to Reno/Tahoe scheduled, plus there are five Fall Family Nature programs that take place in this time frame. In the beginning of October we host one of our biggest special events ECO-Meet.

ECO-Meet is a scholastic competition for 9-12th graders. Schools from the counties around Saline County are all invited. Each school can bring up to 4 teams with four members on each team. It is designed to expose this age group of students to challenging learning experiences. The event has college level exams taken in the morning; this year's tests are Mammals and Wildlife, and a scavenger hunt and interpretive skit for the afternoon. The morning tests are difficult for the students and are meant to encourage them to further their education in the natural sciences. If you're looking for entertainment, the two events in the afternoon are the ones you want to attend. For the scavenger hunt, the students are given a list of different plants and animals and then given 30 minutes to find them within the park. The students always return with interesting items for the judges. Each team will also perform an interpretive skit where members of the team will portray a form of Kansas Wildlife and be judged on their



performance. This can be an informative and amusing event to watch. Each member of these teams is competing individually and as a team for scholarship monies, plus the chance to advance to state for an opportunity for more cash and prizes! This is the 6th year for our event and we continue to grow larger. Last year we had 17 teams participate and hoping for more this year. If you are interested in finding out more about the ECO-Meet, contact us here at the center. We are always looking for more help with the Meet and sponsors to help support this educational and worthwhile event.

Stump the Naturalist

Q: Where do lightningbugs (fireflies) come from and what causes them to light? About dark every evening they seem to come up out of my grass.

Sincerely, Alma Garman, Burr Oak, KS

A: Lightningbugs/fireflies like to rest during the day on plants (including grass) or in the trees, and especially like damp places. They become active as soon as it is dark enough for their flashes to be seen and remain active up until midnight. Their flashing is how they communicate with each other in order to attract mates. The flash patterns differ depending on sex and species. Firefly light is considered "cold light" because it gives off no heat. Three things are needed to make the light: oxygen, breathed in through the trachea in the abdomen, the chemical luciferin, and an enzyme called luciferase ("luci" means light/shining in Latin). These three components are all combined in the photocytes, or light cells, on the underside of the abdomen. When that happens, the lightningbug lights up and the fun begins.

For more information visit these websites:

<http://iris.biosci.ohio-state.edu/projects/FFiles/mainnav.html>

<http://www.ivyhall.district96.k12.il.us/4th/kkhp/1insects/firefly.html>

Thank you Alma for sending us your questions!

If you have a question about Kansas wildlife and/or environment, we invite you to write us and let our Naturalists sort it out. In our next issue, we will print your question along with our answer.



Lakewood Fun Page

Lakewood Trivia!

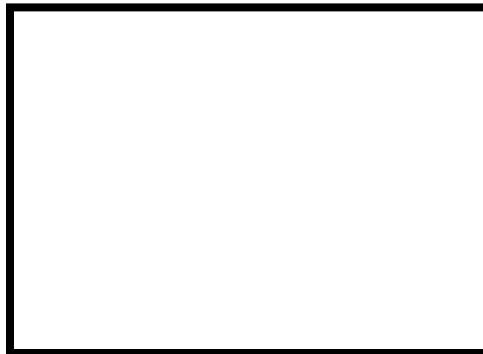
Adult Trivia Questions:

1. What coniferous tree loses its needles during the fall?
2. What two insects are found on the Threatened and Endangered list in Kansas?
3. Why do Monarch Butterflies migrate in the fall?

KIDS! Draw your favorite Fall Outdoor Activity

Kids' Trivia Questions:

1. What poisonous plant turns a bright red in the fall?
2. What is an endangered species?
3. Why is a monarch butterfly colored orange and black?



(Send in your picture, or a copy, be sure to include your name and age. The LDC judges will pick their favorite from those submitted and publish it in the next issue.)

Trivia Answers:

Adults: 1) Bald Cypress, 2) the American Burying Beetle and the Scott Optioservus Riffle Beetle, 3) Monarchs follow a certain angle of the sun that holds the ideal temperatures for them.

Kids: 1) Poison Ivy, 2) Any species of wildlife whose existence is determined to be in jeopardy, 3) To advertise to other animals that it is poisonous.



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